Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*

VOLUME XLIII 1954 NUMBER 3

I accept all the religions that were in the past, and worship them all; I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian church and kneel before the Crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the hearts of everyone. Not only shall I do these things, but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future.

If there is ever to be a Universal Religion, it must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite as the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and Christ, on saints and sinners, alike; which will not be Brahmanical or Buddhist, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for, every human being, from the lowest grovelling savage, not far removed from the brute, to the highest man, towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity, making society stand in awe of him and doubt his human nature. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centered in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature. —*Swami Vivekananda*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Bow down and worship where others kneel, for where so many have been paying tribute of adoration the kind Lord must manifest Himself, for He is all mercy.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Belief in one God is the corner-stone of all religions. But I do not foresee a time when there would be only one religion in practice. In theory, since there is one God, there can be only one religion. But in practice, no two persons I have known have had the same identical conception of God. Therefore, there will perhaps always be different religions answering to different temperaments and climatic conditions. —*Mahatma Gandhi*

All religion is based on the recognition of a superhuman Reality of which man is somehow conscious and towards which he must in some way orientate his life. The existence of the tremendous transcendent reality that we name GOD is the foundation of all religion in all ages and among all peoples. —*Christopher Dawson*

The supreme critic on the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere, that unity, and that Over-soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other. Within man is the soul of the whole, the wise silence, the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related, the eternal One. —*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

There is one body, and one Spirit . . . One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. —*The Bible*

CHRISTIANITY AND VEDANTA

By Swami Paramananda

(An address delivered at the Vedanta Centre of Boston)

In the *Isa Upanishad,* one of India's great scriptures, we are told:

He who sees all beings as the Self and the Self in all beings, how can there be any more delusion or grief for him, since he perceives this oneness everywhere?

There cannot be any more suffering or delusion for him who perceives one Reality pervading this entire universe.

Another Indian Scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita,* tells us:

He who hates no living creature, who is kind and compassionate towards all, who is free from selfish feeling and egotism, equal-minded in pleasure and pain, and forgiving; who is ever content and meditative, self-restrained, firm of faith, and who has resigned his heart to Me, the Supreme Lord, he who loveth Me thus is dear to Me.

In the teachings of Lord Buddha, the Awakened One, we are taught: *not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the Law and to dwell on the Highest.* Furthermore Lord Buddha said:

You must so adjust your heart that you long for the welfare of all beings, including your enemies. If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the full protection of my ungrudging love. The more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me. Let us live happily then, not hating those who hate us.

From another ancient source, Laotze, one of the great seers of China, we gather this wisdom:

To the good I would be good; to the not-good I would also be good, in order to make them good.

Finally we come to the teachings of Christ, who proclaimed:

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven.

I give you these ancient sayings in order to bring to your minds the fact that these varying trends of thought, though proceeding from different sources, yet point to the same goal. For example, there is great unity between what we know as Vedanta, the religious philosophy derived from the revealed books of the Indian Rishis and seers—known as the Vedas—and the Christian gospel. It is for this reason I have taken as my subject this morning *Christianity and Vedanta.* I have done so not in order to show the superiority of one over the other, not with the desire to prove that one is higher than the other or that in order to accept either one, one has to reject the other. On the contrary, my endeavor is to show that all the fundamental principles uphold one ideal.

Christianity, as it is known and accepted, is based on the life and teachings of Jesus the Christ. Vedanta is not founded on the life of any personality. Christianity is about 2000 years old, while Vedanta has been in existence for 4000 years and maybe longer. When we study these two without any prejudice or bias, we find that, apart from all secondary considerations of time, climate and conditions, they represent unity of Truth — and Truth is Eternal. He whom we regard as the all-merciful Father has never been absent from His creation since its beginning (if there ever was a beginning) and has always loved His children. Therefore we must study religion and philosophy not from a sectarian point of view,

not with any dogmatic idea, but with a broad, sympathetic and earnest desire to know the Truth for the sake of Itself, and not merely to satisfy our own preconceived ideas and notions.

Christianity has been recognized as a religion for only about 1600 years, yet there have been zealous, devout ministers of the gospel, who in their eagerness to convert the whole world to the Christian faith, taught that no unconverted people could attain salvation or know true freedom or perfection. But if merely being converted to Christianity is all that man needs to insure his peace and liberation, then why all the unrest and confusion in Europe today? Does it not show us beyond any doubt that the purpose of any religion is something far greater than conversion. I firmly believe that Christ never taught dogma, for as we study the New Testament we find Him striving against the existing religious restrictions. Actually he brought a new interpretation of the old Hebraic faith. He did not come to destroy, but to bring purification and a newer, fresher understanding, so that people would no longer cling to the nonessentials, and fight for them, and base their faith upon them.

That was indeed the message of Christ, but as time rolled on, those who considered themselves Christian, who identified themselves with the "church" or, in other words, with what we know as organized Christianity, forgot the very purpose for which Christ incarnated, and began to preach their religion with fanatic fervor. Unfortunately, this course brought about a certain degradation of the original idea because you cannot force religion on people. No one can enforce his own particular belief upon another mind. The minute we try to do so we arouse antagonism.

In India the holy men also preached their religion because there was an ancient, organized religion of the Vedas, but there was no attempt at imposing their point of view upon anyone. We find an illustration of this Indian attitude in Asoka, the great Buddhist king who, about the year 250 B.C. sent missionaries to all parts of the world, and had erected in India stone tablets on one of which was inscribed the following:

In truth, the King, dear to the gods, has at heart security for all creatures, respect for life, peace and happiness. These are the things that the King, dear to the gods, takes to be the conquests of religion.

The ideal of love of Divine Fatherhood with all mankind as children of that Father did not originate with Christ, but was known among the Greeks and among other peoples who were true worshippers of God.

In fact what Christ taught—freedom in Truth, freedom of the individual, freedom from dependence on ritual and dogma in order that the real spirit of religion might be revealed through the life—was very like the Indo-Aryan teaching. To those who really see below the surface, the teachings of Christ and those which we find recorded in the Vedas are one and the same. In fact, one explains the other, that is, for the person who can approach an old faith without prejudice, without shrinking away because it bears a strange or unusual name.

We must not forget that Christianity was Oriental and that Christ's message was not alien to spiritual ideals already in existence. He came to fulfil; but unless we know what He came to fulfil, it will be very difficult for us to do justice to His message. All the great religions proclaim certain fundamental principles, such as non-killing, nonstealing and love for every living thing. These

commandments you will find not only in the Old and New Testaments, but in all the Bibles of the world.

When a man asked Jesus what was the greatest commandment, He said:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. To me these two sayings contain the whole secret of spiritual living, for the first commandment seeks to awaken in man that love for God which leads to realization of his oneness with God, without which he can never fulfil the second commandment—to love his neighbor as himself. For only as man finds his relationship with the One will he know his relationship with the many. These two commandments given by Christ are universal and eternal.

Wherein then lies the difference between Christianity with its gospel of love and forgiveness and, say, Vedanta with its all-inclusive vision, or Buddhism which lays tremendous emphasis on the same great principles? The organized church which seeks to enlarge its scope through preaching and proselytizing strikes a wrong note. For religion is not a mere conversion from one faith to another, but a conversion of the soul to Truth. Buddhist missionaries understood that, and Vedanta proclaims that we should not assert our own ideas in a spirit of denunciation. God is infinite, He is One without a second, but He is seen differently by His various children, and is called by different names according to their comprehension.

It is through the life that we prove that a message is true. Therein is the sum and substance of all religion. For when we live the life, when we follow the road of genuine righteousness, we are bound to reach the point

where all spiritual paths converge. If we are not willing to do that, if we see only differences and seek to elevate our own faith by tearing down the faith of others, then there can be only quarrel and bloodshed, and what religion upholds such things! No one will say that his Bible, his Saviour would allow him to do wrong to anyone whether belonging to his own faith or to another.

We can see that unless man's heart is enlightened by the love of God, it will be impossible for him to follow the second great commandment which tells us to love all and hate none. How can we realize brotherhood—the oneness of all souls—if we are ignorant of the very first principle on which our life is based, that is, Godhead? Christianity proclaims that we should learn to love God. This is also the first and foremost doctrine of every great religious system. Nonlove for any creature forms no part of any true spiritual teaching. Why then is there so much hatred in the world, such denunciation, especially among people who profess the same religion? It makes us doubt whether men have really adopted the spiritual message of their various faiths.

That is one thing Christianity must explain. If it is based on the life, character and gospel of the gentle, noble and all-loving Jesus of Nazareth, then wherefrom comes the present form of cruel and destructive intolerance which has given rise to most terrible wars and antagonism? We know that Christ has no part in it and that sectarianism has little to do with the true spirit of Christianity or any religion. Christianity, as it originated with Jesus, can be applied in the Orient as well as in the Occident, for it bears the mark of the Eternal, of Truth, forgiveness and love. The same thing we can say of the religious ideals which existed among the Indo-Aryans from

time immemorial. They carried the identical message, although perhaps expressed differently.

When we do not grasp the keynote of religion and of life, then out of our misunderstanding we fight and quarrel and forget our common origin and that we are all created in the image of God and are related to Him. We find that this is especially true amidst the clamor of modern civilization. Religion has gone out of fashion. To love God with one's whole heart seems to some people ridiculous, while praying openly is often looked upon as almost an ignorant act. We have been too much absorbed with material ideas. We have gone too far away from Godhood. Unless we can revive our spiritual ideals, not only in relation to our religious life, but in every aspect of our living, no matter how much we may try to build for happiness, the result can only be misery because we will not have built upon the right foundations. The right foundations require that we dig deep into the meaning of the scriptures in order to discover the essential nature of the great Saviours of the world.

These Saviours do not come from one race or from one group of people, but they speak the same spiritual language and pronounce the same Truth. The Vedanta scriptures state that they come in order to regenerate religious ideals and to show man the path leading toward God. The Lord Sri Krishna proclaims in the Gita:

O Bharata, whenever there is decline of virtue and predominance of vice, then I embody Myself. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of evil-doers and for the reestablishment of (virtue and religion) I am born from age to age.

According to the Vedanta concept there is no one manifestation known as the Saviour of mankind; there

are many manifestations of the one Supreme Creative Power—the One Lord, who out of compassion, out of love for His children comes to lead them Godward. Therefore there can be no contradiction in the teachings which are given, for they all bear the same stamp of authority. They all bring the same infinite Truth. They bring the spirit of unity and not that of destruction.

Now this we do not understand when in taking up one form of religion, we refuse to study any other. It is good to have faith, it is good to have love for our ideal, but our love and faith must not be fanatical. Sometimes we make our God so limited that He even falls short of our standard for the ideal man. Therefore we must expand our vision and create for ourselves a concept of Divinity that is not narrow and limited, but all-inclusive.

Take Jesus the Christ, for instance, in order to grasp His true nature and magnitude we must cease to limit Him to one particular time and place, but see Him in relation to the Teachers who came before Him, and not hold the attitude that the peoples of the earth who existed prior to His birth were for that reason doomed to perdition. To think that those who believe in the dogmatic doctrine of the Christian church are saved while all others are lost, is a very limited belief indeed.

Personality is not all of religion, and whenever we try to assert one Personality over all others, it is bound to create antagonism and cause disaster. The Vedanta philosophy, as I have said, is not based on personality. The same Truth which Lord Krishna interpreted and which Buddha, the Compassionate One, expressed through his illumined life has always existed, for It is eternal just as God and creation are eternal. It never began with one Personality or at any one time. Those who hold this

belief are always inclusive and not exclusive in their spiritual outlook. It is the reason why Vedanta does not seek to proselytize, and is never in conflict with any other religious faith.

When one has been brought up under orthodox influences, this universal attitude may be difficult to understand. In orthodoxy you accept one belief and denounce all others. Often I have heard people ask: "How can you tolerate so many contradictory ideas?" We forget that our inability to accept certain concepts may be due to our own limitations. There may come a time when these "contradictory ideas" may become a part of our consciousness. Spiritual growth is a matter of assimilation. But assimilation requires that we become imbued with our ideals through applying them in our daily life instead of merely dwelling on the externals of religion. As Christ said to His disciples:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Lord Buddha made somewhat the same pronouncement when he declared: *He who does not do what I command, sees me in vain. This brings no profit. Whilst he who lives far off from where I am, and yet walks righteously is ever near me. A man may dwell beside me, and yet, being disobedient, be far away from me; while he who obeys the Law will always enjoy the bliss of the Buddha's presence.*

The Buddhist missionaries were wonderful illustrations of this living aspect of religion. Wherever they went they practised nonkilling, nonstealing, forgiveness even of their enemies, not even recognizing any enemies. Through these means they converted the souls of people

and not merely sought to change them from one outer form of faith to another.

Spirituality is a living thing. When it touches us, inspires us, then we begin to see things as they are in reality, but until then we doubt and quarrel and cannot help but antagonize. To live the life of the spirit in every act, every word and throughout every moment of one's existence—this is what Vedanta stands for. When you can live the Christ ideal, then you may be called a Christian, and when people of other faiths live according to their own Bibles and Saviours, then alone will they prove themselves true disciples of their Masters, true examples of the religion which they profess. When we can all forget our differences in this way, then we shall become united. Through love we shall realize peace and come to know that we are all brothers.

There is a story told of a man who became lost in the wilderness. Night was falling and there was a heavy mist over everything which completely hid his path. As he peered into the gathering darkness he perceived a form approaching, and at once he was overcome by fear. He thought that it was a large animal seeking to destroy him. But as the form drew nearer he saw it was not an animal but a man, and his frightened mind told him it was a robber who would surely steal the little he had and kill him in the bargain. He knew not where to run, so he stood still and suddenly as he watched the stranger approach he realized he was no stranger but his own brother.

So it is often with us. We view things through the mist of ignorance and great distance, and we fear. Take the name Vedanta, for instance. Because it is strange to us and represents an ancient philosophy or faith, we feel that it is alien, that we must not go near it, or it will

lead us astray. When, however, we approach it as we study it (and other ancient religions) with unbiased minds, with a real desire to know the truth, we find that not only does it not harm us, it enlarges our concept of truth, and actually throws light upon our own religion and helps us to understand it better. The meaning of Christ's teaching is sometimes hidden, but it is illumined in the light of teachings that went before. Christ Himself could not fulfil the revelations of the past unless He included them in His life and gospel.

What is the significance of religion? Religion points the way to God. Religion shows our relationship to the Infinite and cannot be divided. Can we divide the infinite sky? Can the Infinite Godhead be divided? That One is open to all living beings, and when It expresses through our life we abandon all narrowness.

Since this universal concept forms the basis of Vedanta, Vedanta stands for the ideal of tolerance. It holds that even when we do not understand a new or an ancient idea or its expression of Deity, we have no right to condemn it; rather our duty is to show sympathy and a tolerant spirit. In India there was a great soul who often said to his disciples: "When you cannot love another, when you cannot see the beauty of an ideal coming from another source, do not denounce it. Allow to those who follow it the same privilege that you yourselves desire, then you will never strike a discordant note." Did Christ ever teach any of His followers to attack those who did not agree with Him? Did He not, as He hung upon the Cross willingly forgive His enemies? If we profess to follow the life of such a Teacher and then take the opposite course, it is a mockery.

What the world needs is the living example. Where

people become illumined through living the principles of their religion, they bring a benediction to all mankind. The great Truth of the Divine Reality in the soul of man can only be taught by manifesting It. Only as we learn truly to love the Lord our God, shall we be able to realize our oneness with our brother.

Thus it is that we find no vital differences between the Christian Bible and the ancient scriptures handed down to us from time immemorial. Let us learn to love God, realize Him and find in Him our whole inspiration and strength. Doing this we shall become fitting instruments for good in the world. But first we must acquire the gift of understanding by means of surrender to the Lord abiding in the hearts of all, that through openness of heart we may know, we may realize the oneness of that Infinite Being.

The ancient Rishis of India having attained that goal, proclaimed in undying voice for all future time:

God is One, Truth is One without a second, but we His children worship Him differently and call Him by different names.

Above, below, in sky and sod
In leaf and spar, in star and man,
Well might the wise Athenian scan
The geometric signs of God
The measured order of His plan.
And India's mystics sang aright
Of the One Life pervading all —
One Being's tidal rise and fall
In soul and form, in sound and sight —
Eternal outflow and recall.

—John Greenleaf Whittier

HARVEST SONG

By Edith Hart Mason

(Reprinted by permission of *Scribner's Magazine.*)

Let us live sacredly,
Sacredly let us live!

The flowering summer clouds are gone.
The dark clouds come to gather rain.
Sacredly let us drink!
Sacredly let us drink!

The colored corn is ripe again.
The beans and yellow squash are in.
Sacredly let us eat!
Sacredly let us eat!

O Father Sun-god!
Great Earth-mother!
Let us touch Thy bounty sacredly!
Touch Thy bounty ever sacredly!

We worship the Wise Lord who made righteousness, the waters, the plants, the stars, the earth, and all objects that are good.

Yea, we worship Him for His sovereign power and His beneficent greatness.

We worship Him as Lord, the Most Beneficent.

We worship Him with our bones and our flesh.

And we worship the spirits of the saints, of holy men and holy women, and righteousness the best.

We do worship the Most Beauteous, the Bountiful Immortal, endowed with light in all things good.

We worship that lofty Lord, the Wise Lord Himself.

—*Zoroaster*

MORTAL AND IMMORTAL

By Sister Devamata

(Two addresses given by the Sister at the Vedanta Centre, Boston, on April 18th, 1919 and April 10th, 1921)

MORTAL

We can never hope to rid ourselves of the ego by suppression. The more we try to suppress it, the deeper grows its impress on our mind. The only way we can rid ourselves of it is by changing our sense of proportion. As long as we deal with little things, the ego will seem very large by comparison. As long as we are interested in the passing show, as long as we rest our happiness on the turns of fashion and take as our standard ever shifting public opinion, we shall remain just where we are. We may pray, we may meditate, but if our sense of proportion does not change, what little we gain at the time of meditation, We shall lose again when we go out into the world.

The very moment, however, that we begin to think about the eternal verities instead of upon the things which today are important and tomorrow forgotten, at once the ego begins to dwindle. We cannot drive it out, but in the face of the Eternal it shrinks away and vanishes of itself. It is just as when a man stands beside a high mountain. Against that immensity he seems very small, whereas if we put him by a blade of grass, he seems very tall. So when we put the ego by the little things of life, it seems important, but when we put it beside things of a lofty nature, it shrinks down to nothingness. Therefore if we wish to rid ourselves of this egotism, our course is plain.

The ego never makes one great. It reduces one to insignificance because it exists by limitation. Each time

the ego asserts itself, it is as if you said, "I am the most insignificant being in the world," because self-assertion always makes one appear that way. But the very moment you begin to think how wonderful God is, how mighty is His universe, what power, order and harmony are everywhere to be found, your value rises in men's eyes and your ego starts to disappear. When you watch even the smallest plant grow, and contemplate the perfection with which God manifests Himself in creation, then you become aware of your own helplessness and your utter dependence on the Supreme Power; and that moment of surrender marks the beginning of wisdom.

In the *Upanishads* it is written of that Infinite One: "He who thinks he knows It, knows It not . . ." Not only does he not know It, but he shuts himself off from knowing It. When we think we know a thing, we never want to listen to any advice concerning it. We are indignant that it could be supposed for a moment that we could learn anything more about it. Pride enters and blocks the way to real knowledge.

But the scripture goes on to say: "He who thinks he knows It not, knows It." When we think we know It not at all because of Its infinitude, by that admission we prove that we are beginning to know It, for we are ready to listen, eager to learn, and as the result of our humility, understanding grows. Humility is the greatest enemy of the ego. It is one of the virtues which opens the door through which the Divine enters, because humility means receptivity. More and more we begin to perceive that though we of ourselves are nothing, there is a Source of supply within us and without us from which all things come, and we open ourselves to That.

Humility, however, can never be gained by artificial

means any more than the ego can be destroyed by the artificial means of suppression. The only way we gain it is again by changing our sense of proportion. Our thought cannot rest very long near God without making us feel exceedingly humble on the human side. This does not crush us or discourage us because that in us which knows God, is one with Him. It is the human side, the ego side, that quickly goes down. So whenever you find your pride and vanity rising and shutting you away from the Divine, go and contemplate the great universe of God. See it as your background; see yourself in comparison with it. Through your thought, rush out to His immensity or learn from the great God-manifestations.

It is not always possible for us to form an abstract picture of Divinity, but we can think of the majesty of Buddha or of Christ or of some other illumined one, and at once our pretensions will seem childish and foolish, and in silence we shall humbly bow our head. The very moment the barrier of pride is broken down, a little more of God flows in. Our sense of proportion becomes better adjusted, for as we grow in the knowledge of God, we grow out of the consciousness of ego.

Belief in the reality of the little self always makes us egotistic, either self-appreciative or self-depreciative, which is only another form of vanity. It makes us very conscious of our small personal needs: we suffer when we are blamed and feel puffed up when we are praised. In short, we find ourselves constantly in a state of disturbed balance. When ego-consciousness is uppermost, there can be no majesty, no dignity, no power or harmony in life. The little self lacks all these attributes, but the Great Self in us manifests them, and as we approach God we approach that greater Self.

Just, however, as a man cannot see his own face except as it is reflected in a mirror, so in the beginning we cannot see the Divine Self except as It is reflected in some outer manifestation of the Ideal. Gradually as we serve the Ideal, whether in our own heart or through some such manifestation, we come to realize our oneness with It, and we know that we too, in reality, are beyond the ego. The ego makes us puny instead of increasing our importance. Instead of giving us strength, it weakens us. Instead of making us great, it makes us very small. Each time we assert ourselves we have lost, not gained. Each time we step aside in humility, we have gained and not lost in genuine stature.

A great Teacher in India once said that entrance into the spiritual realm is the exact opposite to entrance into the world. In the world you push your way in, you assert yourself, you force people to accept you; while in the spiritual realm you feel unworthy to enter. But when you hesitate and stand back, all who are in that blessed circle strive to draw you into their midst. It gives one a great lesson in humility — humility not based on weakness or ignorance, but born from the knowledge that apart from God we are nothing; we are like a firefly before the sun; but with Him we are partakers of His infinite wisdom and all-enfolding compassion.

Let us, then, draw close to the Divine Sanctuary in our hearts and realize that out of that silence will be spoken the wise word; out of that storehouse will flow true love, and that only as we become nothing shall we manifest all things.

IMMORTAL

When we think and talk of mortal and immortal, of matter and Spirit, we must be very careful not to fall

into the error of imagining these as two conditions with a wide gulf between them, at war one with the other. We can no more say of any particular part of our being, this is our spiritual part or this is our material part, than we can say of any particular part of the universe, God is here because He seems more in evidence here, but He is not there. The spiritual and material exist one within the other, as it were, in each atom of our being, and when we move away from the physical and sensual into the spiritual and supersensual, we merely move to a different part of the same atom; we move from the outer to the inner. Therefore it is not a question of mutilating or mortifying the body or of casting off any part of our outer being. In the spiritual life we are not asked ever to do that. It is a question of gaining the consciousness of the spiritual in the very midst of the sensual and material.

As we are now, we lay accent on the physical, on the gross part of our manifestation. We do it by pampering it, by making it real to us, thereby arousing it and causing it to assert itself. In this way, one aspect of life is revealed to us—the material aspect—and just so long as we yield to the outer appetites, and believe that our life is wholly dependent on material things, and attach undue importance to them, we shall feed the material side of our nature and grow dense and heavy. Has it ever occurred to you why it is that as people grow older they so often put on weight and become heavier in every way? It is simply because they are giving the mind more and more to material values, and the outcome is that the material puts its stamp on them. That is one reason why the body in old age lacks the lightness and transparency that it knew in the years of childhood.

When we begin to lay our stress on the more intangible values, however, our body becomes transformed; it is spiritualized; that is, each atom of our being gives expression, as it were, to the spiritual. That spiritual essence is in each atom and will shine forth when we cease to dwell on the gross side of existence. It is literally true that people who lead spiritual lives of lofty aspiration, unconsciously rise above all their sensual cravings. They no longer demand a variety of heavy foods, money, clothes, diversion and constant excitement. They transcend their material instincts just by the force of their higher thought. They do not feel it essential to be eating and drinking all the time or sleeping out of all reason, because they are drawing their strength from the inner Source of power. If we had a subtle enough vision, the man who is always feeding his denser nature and attaching enormous importance to his body would appear to us as if he were encircled by a ring of darkness instead of a ring of light.

We all are in danger of concentrating upon the (to us) more tangible side of existence. Too often our thoughts are heavy and inert. They move slowly, and with great difficulty let go of the old point of view in order to take on new and better ideas. When, however, we bring in the light of spiritual perception, we shall begin to realize that our mind is part of the great ocean of mind and cannot be separated from that ocean. If we will but drop this notion of *my thought* and *thy thought,* and see all thought as part of God's thought, then the God-side in us will begin to manifest. Our accent then will be on the side of the immortal.

That is why the very words of one accustomed to living a life consecrated to selflessness and holiness seem to

bring illumination. Sometimes even a single word from such a one will break the darkness and free a man from inner bondage. You find that is true of all the great Teachers. They speak, and behold men wake up out of the sleep of the material and rise into the spiritual. Why is this? It is because there is literally about each word that they utter a halo of spiritual light. So it is also with all our intellectual processes when we turn toward God and away from the self; when we begin to put our mind back into the Great Mind. Only then do we see clearly, do we understand clearly, do we cease to blunder, and become of real use to the world.

All this does not mean that we must blot out the mind. On the contrary we must give it greater life, a firmer basis by bringing it into contact with the Source of mind, the Fountainhead of all existence. This is true also of our heart. People often imagine that the spiritual life is a selfish life. The world is busy running around, absorbed in its own affairs. Its whole idea is the social idea, its standard is the standard of public opinion. Thus when it sees someone who has the courage to consecrate himself to higher things, to be indifferent to praise or blame and to seek from the world no honor or advantage of any kind, then it calls that person selfish. That is only because it cannot see or comprehend his true heart.

No one who lives amid the noise of the multitude and is always busy going outward rather than inward, can have genuine power in his love. His mind is too confused; his life too tangled. It is the silent, uplifted, wholly consecrated hearts that become the true channels of divine compassion. Human love is a mixed love. It has something of good in it and something of evil. It has some night in it and some day; some storm and some sun-

shine. Thus it is that human love gives joy and also it gives pain; but divine love gives only life, sweetness and joy. Every impulse of such love, every act of true service and devotion has around it that same halo of light which illumines God-inspired words and thoughts. That is why when a truly consecrated person speaks a loving word, does a loving deed, the effect is far-reaching. The merest touch from the hand of the dedicated brings new life and has such a soothing quality that it causes pain actually to cease or to quiet down.

One of this type does not practise a stiff and hard morality. I know of nothing that is so deadening as morality divorced from spirituality, nothing so angular, ungracious, unlovely. The Spirit, however, transforms morality which then partakes of the Christ quality, the Buddha quality, and is given a softness, a loftiness, a sweetness that make us long to follow the good and turn away from the evil. Moral teaching of this type does not awaken rebellion, resentment or scoffing. It silences the scoffers and wins over the rebellious souls. This is what is meant by the mortal putting on immortality. It does not mean waiting till we cast off this body, till we die to this estate and enter into another. It means that by holy living from day to day, by ceasing to listen to the mortal demands and appetites, we slough of the impermanent elements in our consciousness and the gross elements in our outer being.

Let us not think of ourselves as manikins with God sitting off somewhere in space pulling the strings. God does not reach us from without, from some great height. He reaches us from within where He has His dwelling in the heart of man.

How is it possible for us to live day by day in the

thoughtless way that we do when all the time within us is the Eternal and the Infinite One. It shows that we do not really believe He is there. We prefer to assert our ego, we prefer to cling to our lower self with all its little appetites and indulgences, its petty, cheap pleasures and satisfactions. We are afraid of the bigger life, of the bigger joy. We are afraid that it is going to ask of us some great sacrifice. We may justify ourselves by saying that our immortal nature is hidden from us, so how can we be expected to know it. The Immortal can never be hidden save by our small self, and the moment we remove that self, the Divine is there, shining in Its fulness, even in the darkness.

It is for us to try to feel that greater nature within us, that nature which is all light, that nature which calls on us to be big rather than small, to be infinite, not finite; to be eternal, not subject to death and dying—that nature in us which is our true nature, the Source of all that we are and all that we can ever be. We can only pray:

O Thou Eternal One, rouse us from this foolish slumber, make plain to us that from Thee flows all our happiness and that Thou art to be found only within.

When shall we learn that as long as we move outward, we move away from joy and peace and that when we linger at the circumference of our being, we remain in weakness and in darkness. We shall never grow wise by seeking for knowledge here and there in the outer world, but when we seek the shrine within and bow at the Divine Feet, a new power of perception, a new understanding of all things will rise in our mind and heart and we shall go forth fortified through knowing That, by knowing which all else becomes known.

That God within is love itself, but in our ignorance

we look to the world without to satisfy our heart-hunger and soul-need. As a result we find only heartaches and disappointments. Not until we turn with our whole being to the Inward Reality and give ourselves up to That in one complete offering of love, shall we be able to carry that love into our outer existence to soothe and soften other hearts and lives. Oh, may we not sell our heritage for a mess of pottage! May we no longer spend all our energies in serving the finite! But may we transform our service of the finite into an act of worship of the Infinite. Thus, even in our daily tasks we shall learn communion with the One Lord. If we are lonely, may that One help us to seek companionship with Him. If we are despondent and helpless, may we turn to Him as our support and guide, and if we are ambitious, may we be satisfied with nothing less than God.

Finally, may our prayer be not for things of this world, but for patience, humility, perfect obedience to the highest, true love and compassion for God's children everywhere, and a steadfast spirit of devotion, so that whenever we go forth in service to our fellows, the Divine blessing may rest upon us and upon them. In this way our lives will be made whole, and the mortal in us will put on immortality.

His kingdom dwelleth in thee! . . . Enter in, leaving the wandering of pleasures and the corruption of lusts, the errors of the love of money, and the business that harmeth thee. Enter thou in and dwell in thine own self in the cleared ground of thine own mind and seek there the Kingdom. Enter thou in and dwell within thine own heart, for lo! there is God; for it is not He that goeth forth from thee, but thou that goest forth from Him.

—*Ephraem Syrus,* (306-373 A.D.)

A CHALICE OF LOVE

A TRIBUTE TO THE HOLY MOTHER

by Kathryn Fisk

This year of 1953-54 marks the centenary of the birth of Sri Saradamani Devi—wife and disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, the "God-man" of modern times. It is with humility that we bring our little offering of devotion to her who was so truly called "Holy Mother," and with profound reverence we crave the blessing of her boundless love. ". . . It is not," writes Sister Nivedita in a letter to her, "a flushed and violent love, like ours, and like the world's, but a gentle peace that brings good to everyone and wishes ill to none." Indeed hers was what the Lord Buddha wished when he begged his disciples to have a "firmamental heart," for though she was always an orthodox Brahmin, nothing, not even the rules of her caste nor the opinion of her society, could stand in the way of the stream of divine compassion that found pure expression in her humble life.

Sister Nivedita, in the same letter, refers to the Holy Mother as: "Sri Ramakrishna's own chalice of His love for the world," and so it would seem. After his passing she, whom he had worshipped as the Virgin Mother of the Universe, became mother, guide and refuge for his disciples; for all who earnestly turned toward the Highest.

Once when severely rebuked by a devotee for having accepted some fruit as an offering to Sri Ramakrishna from a man who was not only a Moslem and therefore "out-caste" but who was known as a common thief, she said sternly, "I know who is good and who is not!" This knowledge came not from a Vedantic awareness of the

oneness of all things, nor even alone from her own divine realization that there was nothing but God anywhere in the universe or beyond it. Her understanding was human as well as divine, and with it she perceived the intentions and the struggles of her countless children. Even as a mother cannot punish her tiny child for falling down nor cast him aside because he loses his temper or is not otherwise perfect in virtue, even so did Sarada Devi look upon the faults and failings of humanity, forgiving all, and by her incomparable love moulding weakness into strength, lack of love into deep devotion and doubt into unshakeable faith.

The Mother's love was not a thing of heart and mind, of thoughts and words alone, for not only had she the power of bestowing a very palpable peace and blessing upon those who were in need, but also she poured her life out in real and very active service to those around her. Even as an earthly mother of necessity gives her all to the care of her children and her home, so did this Mother of souls work incessantly, proving the fibre of her love in every act of her life, in countless ways giving external expression to the divine love which completely possessed her mind and heart. Swami Virajananda tells of how at one time, when he and several other monks were very ill with malarial fever in her native village, the Holy Mother would go begging from door to door to get a small amount of milk for them, and with what real concern she brooded over her "sons" during their sickness.

Sri Sarada Devi was not just a woman with an extraordinary capacity for love. She was truly an instrument of that Divine Love that gives birth to universes. Even as a little child she prayed the sublime prayer for perfect

purity. She was so completely given to God that her body became a tool in His hand, her mind a vessel filled with Divine Wisdom, and her heart a chalice of Holy Compassion. Yet, in spite of her transcendent nature, her *Dharma* was to bring that inaccessible Divine right down into human terms and lives. Her role in the great play of life was not that of cloistered nun, forever enrapt in her sweet contemplation. Hers was the path of the householder; nor did she ever try to shirk her obligations as such. To the trials and confusions of domestic life, to the often unreasonable demands of her relatives, she gave herself as whole-heartedly as she did to her meditation, her worship and her spiritual ministry, and with complete humility. She did all in the name of him who was her husband, her Guru and her *Ishta* (embodied ideal), taking nothing to herself. When he lived she served him in devoted silence never looking for his praise, and when he passed into *Mahasamadhi,* her life became a living offering to him and a perfect expression of his ideals of spirituality, of renunciation and consecration. He had looked upon her and had actually worshipped her as the Divine Mother. His vision of her was fulfilled. Her last instructions, given to a devotee who wept beside her death-bed, reveal the nurturing quality of her unlimited love: ". . . Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child; this whole world is your own!" Such complete dedication is very difficult for ordinary human beings to comprehend, but its attainment is not impossible. With the little light we have we can gain more light. With the little love we have we can gain more love. We become that which we allow our minds to dwell upon, and with such a luminous star to hold our gaze as Sri Sarada Devi, in time we cannot fail

to see our ideals fulfilled, our minds illumined and our hearts expanded even to the greatness of her own. If we turn to her with sincerity of purpose, with true humility, she will help us along the way. For who can think, because she no longer lives on this earthly plane, that the world is not still her own, that we of the human race are not her children?

When we think of you, Mother, it seems to be always the "hour of peace," twilight over the Ganges, when the quiet and the coolness come, and peace. You are profoundly absorbed within yourself, and we sit very still in your presence, bathing our world-weary souls in your tranquillity and your tenderness.

Have mercy on us, Mother, that we may be free of the mundane things of existence, free to seek and to find the secret of the Divine Love that chose to dwell in your unfathomable heart.

He that loveth, flieth, runneth, and rejoiceth; he is free, and cannot be held in.

He giveth all for all, and hath all in all; because he resteth in One Highest above all things, from whom all that is good flows and proceeds.

He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the Giver.

Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but is fervent beyond all measure. Love feels no burden, thinks nothing a trouble . . . pleads no excuse of impossibility . . .

Enlarge Thou me in love, that with the inward palate of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to love, and to be dissolved, and, as it were, to bathe myself in Thy Love.

Let me be possessed by Love, mounting above myself, through excessive fervour and admiration.

—*Imitation of Christ*

VEDANTA ON THE AIR

BROADCASTS

By Sister Daya and Olive Conway

(January 23, 1954)

OLIVE CONWAY: It is our pleasure now to interview Sister Daya, who though bearing an Indian name, is a true daughter of America and our own Golden West. Sister Daya, how does it happen that you who are of the West are now representing the great Vedanta philosophy of India?

SISTER DAYA: Because I find in it great inclusiveness and because the founder of our work felt that in the union of the East and West man will find the full realization of his spiritual ideals. Truth is one, men call it by many names. Sometimes they call it science; sometimes they call it philosophy; sometimes they call it religion. The truth Vedanta seeks to express is universal and therefore cannot be limited by any racial or national boundaries. This sums up the great ideals for which our Ashrama stands.

OLIVE CONWAY: Just where is the Ananda Ashrama situated with its Temple of the Universal Spirit?

SISTER DAYA: It is located about 2200 feet up in the foothills adjacent to La Crescenta, at the north end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

OLIVE CONWAY: What does the name "Ananda Ashrama" mean?

SISTER DAYA: It is a Sanskrit name meaning a place where the bliss of God is to be realized.

OLIVE CONWAY: Could you outline for us some of these great and universal ideals for which you say the Ashrama stands?

SISTER DAYA: Yes, indeed. First, let it be understood that the Ashrama's sole interest is the realization of Truth and spiritual unity. Perhaps I can give its ideals more clearly in the words of its founder, Swami Paramananda, who described its spiritual purpose in the year 1928, when he dedicated the Temple.

"In connection with this dedication ceremony," he said, "we are not going to make it an occasion for invoking the gods of tradition and sect, but rather that One who presides over all and bestows upon all equally His love and His protection.

"There is a verse from an ancient Buddhist prayer that I want to read to you, not that we would lay special emphasis on Buddhism, but because it is a prayer which any one with breadth of vision might have written in any age: *Let all things that breathe, all women and all men, in the east and in the west, in the north and in the south, without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path.*

"There is nothing, I think, that could give a better background for the thought which inspired us to build this Temple that is to embody all the great religions so far as we can understand them, than do these lines: 'Let all things that breathe . . . move forward freely, each in his own path!' And it is our prayer that the ideal of Christ and Christ-men like St. Francis, who gave to the world undying blessings; of Buddha and his followers who learned the art of loving and serving without ever striking a discordant note; of Zoroaster, the great prophet

of the Parsees; of Judaism; of Mohammedanism; of Sufism; of the Chinese faith as exemplified in Laotze, Confucius and others who gave of their spirit of love and consecration to mankind, that all these great faiths may continue to shed blessings upon the world of men, and that all may be united here in the Temple that we have built.

"As a matter of fact we cannot build any temple. The real temple, the real church, the real place of worship is built not by man's hands, but by the souls of the consecrated, who give their lives for the service of God and humanity. Such souls may leave no trace behind them in the form of a church or a building, but their lives radiate and continue to radiate unbounded light, and that is the spirit we want to invoke.

"In dedicating this Temple, we do it not with the idea of erecting something which embodies grandeur or peculiarity, or which signifies a sectarian cult, but rather that which may breathe with its prayers, with its devotion, with its service and with its love, those ideals which all men who serve God try to express by following each his own path.

"I do not want you to think," the Swami continued, "that I am the first to conceive this idea of a temple to the Universal Spirit. I do not desire any such credit. It has been dreamed of by many souls. I have known great personages who have had this vision.

"Not through armament, not through political scheming, not by dividing and separating one man from another, one country from another, one nation from another, not by these means will the world's

ideals be realized; but rather by man's finding his inner unity with the Divine Spirit who is unbounded, ever-abiding, ever-protecting.

"I have wished that it were possible to consecrate this shrine without a word, for the real consecration is silent prayer. In the exuberance of our feelings, however, we must have some outlet in order to share with others, and that is what this Temple stands for."

OLIVE CONWAY: Thank you, Sister Daya, for giving us an insight into the purpose and meaning of the Ananda Ashrama in La Crescenta. During our next broadcast may we go with you into your beautiful Temple of the Universal Spirit?

SISTER DAYA: I should be most happy to take you and all our listening friends into our Temple and interpret for you the meaning of its shrines with their revelation that all great religions lead to God.

(January 30, 1954)

OLIVE CONWAY: It is our pleasure now again to interview Sister Daya. Sister Daya, last Saturday you promised that you would take your listeners on a visit to the Temple of the Universal Spirit at the Ananda Ashrama. Are you ready to fulfil that promise?

SISTER DAYA: More than ready! And there is room on my magic carpet for all who care to go.

OLIVE CONWAY: Let us be off, then, to the hills above the valley of La Crescenta—the Valley of the Crescent Moon.

SISTER DAYA: As we approach the Ashrama, let me tell you what an ancient Mexican, over a hundred years

old, told a friend of ours. This valley of La Crescenta, so the Mexican said, used to be known as the Valley of Peace. The Indians were in the habit of coming here to settle their differences and smoke their peace pipes. Also shepherds liked to fold their flocks here at night, because they felt that here they would be safe . . . You can see how the valley is held in the arms of the Verdugo hills on one side and the Sierra Madre range on the other. But here we are!

OLIVE CONWAY: At the Ashrama?

SISTER DAYA: In the very heart of it, the Temple patio. How white the Temple looks, outlined against the blue sky, with the mountains as a background. And through the arches of the encircling arcades see what lovely vistas there are of greenery and distant hills! Let us now, however, go into the Temple.

OLIVE CONWAY: How lovely and simple it is! And what an atmosphere of peace!

SISTER DAYA: Everyone says that. The soft-tinted walls with their frieze of wild buckwheat give one a restful feeling, but peace was built into it by its founder Swami Paramananda, and by the many who have worshipped here.

OLIVE CONWAY: What is the curtained alcove at the end of the Temple with illumined above it the words, *Where I Am There Is Peace?*

SISTER DAYA: It is our shrine. During services the curtain is drawn back and an altar is revealed with a golden background on which is the Sanskrit sacred word AUM — the sound-symbol of the Absolute Deity.

OLIVE CONWAY: Will you explain that a little further?

SISTER DAYA: The ancient Indo-Aryans felt that no name could be given to the Absolute One, because any name would limit that Infinitude. Yet there had to be some way to express It. Therefore they chose the Word A-U-M—AUM, because it begins in the throat and ends with the closed lips, thus including the whole gamut of sound, just as the One includes all life and being. It is a universal sound and when chanted rightly makes one think of the wind in the trees, the sound of the ocean, the buzzing of bees, the roar of a great city.

OLIVE CONWAY: Is not the Word AUM also used in Tibet?

SISTER DAYA: Yes. But there it is generally used in a sentence, *Om Mani Padme Hum* meaning AUM, the Jewel in the Lotus—that is, the jewel of the Infinite Spirit within the lotus heart of man. The devout Hindu associates It with the Absolute Deity. It is the sound-symbol of God, but in a deeper sense he feels that, being a reflection of the cosmic creative Word—It *is* God.

OLIVE CONWAY: It makes me think of St. John: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

SISTER DAYA: Exactly.

OLIVE CONWAY: Thank you for that explanation. AUM and AMEN are not so unlike, are they?

SISTER DAYA: I doubt if there is any outer connection.

OLIVE CONWAY: I see there are niches along the Temple walls, and above them, stained glass windows.

SISTER DAYA: The windows depict great places of worship of the different religions, and the niches contain illumined quotations from their scriptures. For instance, right over your head is the Temple of Mad-

ura in India, and at the farther end, on the same wall, the beautiful Christian Cathedral of Chartres. Next is the Jewish Synagogue in Florence, Italy, and beyond that, the Temple of Niko in Japan. The Japanese have a saying that you have never seen beauty till you have seen Niko. Across from the Temple of Madura is the Mohammedan Mosque of Omar, then China's Temple of Heaven, and so on.

OLIVE CONWAY: The great motto of your work is *Truth is One; men call It by many names.* Is not that inscribed anywhere?

SISTER DAYA: Yes, in Sanskrit letters upon our altar.

OLIVE CONWAY: How is the oneness of Truth revealed in your Temple?

SISTER DAYA: Let me read you some of the inscriptions in the niches; then you will understand. Here, right next to the entrance, the American Indian speaks to us: *Wakonda is the unknown Life, unchangeable, exalted, very near, mysterious, too great for the mind of man. Many things be godlike, for are they not all from Him, but He alone is God.*

OLIVE CONWAY: And we have thought of the Indians merely as savages!

SISTER DAYA: They had wisdom to give us if we had had the wisdom to receive it.

OLIVE CONWAY: What are some of the inscriptions on the opposite wall?

SISTER DAYA: Across from the American Indian, in the Chinese niche, we read the words of Laotze: *To the good I would be good. To the not-good I would also be good in order to make them good.*

OLIVE CONWAY: I notice that there are pictures and figures in some of the niches.

SISTER DAYA: Yes, pictures of the founders of our work, and also of Jesus the Christ. The golden figure to the left as you face the shrine is the Lord Buddha. A little farther on in the Buddhist niche, is a wonderful quotation from the Buddha. You can read it from here.

OLIVE CONWAY: *Hatred is not conquered by hatred at any time; hatred is conquered by love. This is an eternal Law.*

SISTER DAYA: Can you not see how Truth is One? The Christ could have said that.

OLIVE CONWAY: He did, in other words.

SISTER DAYA: The alabaster figure on the pedestal is Mahavir, the founder of the Jain religion of India. That was the religion in which Mahatma Gandhi was born. It lays great stress on harmlessness to all living things.

OLIVE CONWAY: What is that carved wooden image to the right of the shrine platform?

SISTER DAYA: That is of the Virgin, representing the Motherhood of God. It was copied by a young Mexican from the famous Virgin of Guadaloupe. On the other side of the Temple there is another example of the motherhood idea. It is the figure of Kwan Yin, the goddess of Mercy, in the Chinese niche. This figure has an interesting history. Over 300 years ago it was given by an emperor of China to a great Chinese house and was established in the family temple. There it rested peacefully until the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, when the temple was bombed. The base of the statue was shattered, but fortunately the figure itself was saved. It was placed in a cave for safekeeping and finally was sent

to a member of the family in Los Angeles, a merchant, who consented to part with it to one of our friends, in order that it might be placed once more in a temple.

OLIVE CONWAY: Who was Kwan Yin?

SISTER DAYA: The story is legendary, but Kwan Yin symbolizes to the Chinese and to many Japanese, divine compassion. There is a beautiful prayer to Kwan Yin which the Japanese repeat :

"Oh Thou that sittest above the sound of prayer—
O Thou Lovely One with Thy beautiful face,
With Thy beautiful eyes!
Thou knowest not crime,
Thou sayest of the evil-doer,
'His brow is fevered,' and Thou layest
Thy hand on his hot brow
And coolest it to peace."

OLIVE CONWAY: That surely is the mother spirit.

SISTER DAYA: The spirit of Christ and all the great Teachers.

OLIVE CONWAY: What words are inscribed in the Christian niche?

SISTER DAYA: *The Lord our God is One* from the Hebraic scripture, and from the lips of Jesus these very significant words: *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God . . . lo, the kingdom of God is within you.*

OLIVE CONWAY: How easy it is to forget that truth, and instead look *outside* for the Kingdom of God.

SISTER DAYA: Man can find only what he has within the depths of his own soul. That is why the ancient Greeks said, *Man, know thyself.* And Sri Ramakrishna, a mighty prophet of modern India declared: *Know thyself and thou shalt know God.* There is a point in consciousness where man and God blend and become one. The different ways that men have

sought that oneness constitute the different world religions.

OLIVE CONWAY: Is it not that which is inscribed here in the Hindu niche? *As different streams having their sources in different places mingle their waters in the sea, so O Lord, the different paths men take, through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.*

SISTER DAYA: Unfortunately, we have not time to read any more inscriptions; but how they reveal that God is *One,* though men call Him by various names!

OLIVE CONWAY: Did you happen to see recently in *This Week* magazine an article by Edward W. Barrett in which it was urged that if all religions would drop their differences and unite in the great ethical and spiritual truths which they have in common, peace could be restored to the world?

SISTER DAYA: Yes, I read it and the versions given of the Golden Rule in the different world faiths.

OLIVE CONWAY: The author should visit this Temple.

SISTER DAYA: There is a poem of Swami Paramananda's which exactly expresses the universal message of our Temple as well as man's responsibility toward it. It is called: *No East nor West.*

"When thou journeyest westward
Thou canst not leave East behind;
  Nor canst thou part from the North
When thy feet are turned to the South.
The ray of the sun toucheth all quarters
  And bestoweth on all its living,
    warming balm.
The light of the soul knoweth no boundary lines;
It hath no East nor West, North nor South.
Yea, the light of the soul shineth everywhere,
Save when we keep our doors shut—
Alas, when we keep our doors shut!"

OLIVE CONWAY: If only all men were filled with that spirit!

SISTER DAYA: Gradually the war of religions will cease, I believe, and men, experiencing the truths of religion in their own hearts, will through this religion of experience, learn to respect one another and live in harmony, each following his own path.

OLIVE CONWAY: Next Saturday, Sister Daya, will you tell us more of this wider vision contained in the "religion of experience" and how it makes for the brotherhood of mankind?

SISTER DAYA: It will be my privilege to try to do so.

OLIVE CONWAY: Thank you, Sister Daya, for inviting us to join you on your magic carpet to visit the Temple of the Universal Spirit in the hills above the valley of La Crescenta—The Valley of the Crescent Moon.

This world is God's. Nothing in it can I call my own; He is getting His work done by me; verily nothing belongs to me. If you can do what you call your duties with this attitude, then they will do you no harm; your work will no longer bind you. "This thing belongs to me, that is mine," this attitude you must banish from your mind; in its stead say: "Everything is God's, even myself; I am placed here by His Will, and I shall be removed hence the moment He wills it." Let this be your principle of life. Do not identify yourself with the things of the world.

Do your duties with this attitude; and also do them thoroughly and well, so that people may not perceive your real motive and blame you. But in the heart of hearts know, earthly things you have none. God is the Doer and you the instrument. Through you He will get done what He likes to have done.

—*Swami Brahmananda*

THE BAAL SHEM

By David C. Grindell

(Conclusion)

Now to return to the Baal Shem and his teachings. The essence of these was the glad tidings of the omnipresence and all-lovingness of God. Everything that exists, everything that we perceive in our sense-world inheres in Godlike forms of His being. Everything that men think, or say, or do is the living God actualizing Himself through men. Men should therefore live uprightly and worthily and joyously, glorifying God in whatever they do no matter how insignificant or routine it may be. This tenet of the all-closeness of God can hardly be exaggerated. The Hasidim believed it and acted it. Their zaddikim demonstrated it continually and dramatically by living example: for instance, a typical quip makes a zaddik say: "I did not go to the Maggid of Meserich to learn Torah from him but to watch him tie his bootlaces!" This interfusion of divine reality with happenings of everyday life strikes the keynote of Hasidism. It leads to a strangely paradoxical view of things; it forms the substance of many of the jokes; it has also given rise to the stock objection of "pantheism."

A recent author sums up the whole attitude as follows: "Of the high things they spoke as of things which were taking place in the here and now; of earthly happenings they spoke as though these were woven of a heavenly substance."

What of the problem of evil? God is in all things, hence there is good, potential or actual in everything. Evil is not something bad in itself, but only in relation to man. Sinfulness is no reason for despair, since none

is beyond God's grace; sin is not to be despised but to be purified. Bodily functions and sense appetites are healthy things. To the truly pious man, eating, drinking, sleeping and praying are all the same. Pride or strong sense of ego is the worst sin. Now the same blithely paradoxical view of things is seen here too:

> Once, just before New Year's, the Baal Shem came to a certain town and asked the people who read the prayers there in the Days of Awe. They replied that this was done by the rabbi of the town. "And what is his manner of praying?" asked the Baal Shem.
>
> "On the Day of Atonement," they said, "he recites all the confessions of sin in the most cheerful tones."
>
> The Baal Shem sent for the rabbi and asked him the cause of this strange procedure. The rabbi answered: "The least among the servants of the king, he, whose task it is to sweep the forecourt free of dirt, sings a merry song as he works, for he does what he is doing to gladden the king."
>
> Said the Baal Shem: "May my lot be with yours."

The crown of the whole teaching is prayer: it is the way into God-communion. The Besht declared: "All that I have achieved, I have achieved not through study but through prayer." But prayer is not a matter of petitioning to, or bargaining with, God—it is a means of *cleaving* to Him. Wooden or mechanical prayers are worse than none at all. There is even a definite technique of prayer, comprising three stages. *Kavvanah* requires concentration: the individual puts off from himself all outer distractions to the point where he becomes fully oblivious of the external world. With *hithlahabuth* a state of high enthusiasm is reached: "the wood of the altar is enkindled and the flames shoot upward" is the way this stage is described. The altar is the soul and the flame its aspiration. Finally, *debekuth* is the cleaving or union, when nothing intervenes any longer between man and God. All things flow together as the individual soul realizes

its identity with the Universal Being. An indescribable joy is felt. This great fulfilment is the goal of all. The Besht said: "The ideal of man is to be a revelation himself, clearly to recognize himself as a manifestation of God."

The great paradox of Hasidism — and it is more a seeming paradox than an actual one — is that God is discovered at once in transcendent inward rapture and in prosaic outward living. And for this paradox too, as for all others, there was a story:

> The rabbi of Kotzk called to some of his Hasidim: "What is all this talk of praying 'earnestly'! What is the meaning of to pray 'earnestly'?"
>
> They did not understand what he had in mind.
>
> "Is there anything at all," he said, "that one ought not to do earnestly?"

Hasidic prayer has some obvious affinities with raja yoga. For instance, *debekuth* clearly corresponds to *dhyana* or *samadhi*. The indescribable joy answers to *ananda*. A striking point of divergence, however, is that yoga requires tranquil remaining in a position (*asana*), while the Hasid prayed with vigorous body movements, waving of the arms, shouting and dancing. The Baal Shem said that one should pray like a drowning man! Here the affinity would be with the dervishes, both of the shouting and dancing varieties.

We are not trying to draw any strained parallelisms so as to see in the Besht a kind of Jewish yogi or dervish. Most of the parallelisms given here have been noted by others. The point is, that in the great efflorescence of human and divine experience that was Hasidism, many things come to view that bear a curious resemblance to features of other traditions seemingly remote. As an example: the Hasidic tales are very much like the tales of Zen Buddhism. This is a parallel which has not escaped

Martin Buber, the famous contemporary philosopher, who, among his other distinctions, is perhaps our foremost authority on Hasidism. He has been a Hasid himself for many years.

In this connection we should note that reincarnation, or metempsychosis as it is usually called by the writers, was one of the tenets. This was not original with the Hasidim, though, but had been given out through the Cabala and Zohar. Both the Besht and Dov Baer dis- and wanderings of the soul. Those in-cussed the destiny terested in this subject should refer to the book of David L. Mekler, *Miracle Men: Tales of the Chassidim,* especially pages 177-190, where an illustrative tale is given. Of one of the most saintly zaddikim, "the seer of Lublin," it is said:

> When he looked at anyone's forehead, or at his note of request, he saw to the root of his soul and beyond it to the first man. He saw whether that soul came from Abel or from Cain, saw how often, in its wanderings, it had assumed bodily shape, what had been destroyed or bettered in each incarnation, in what sin it had become entangled, and to what virtue it had ascended.

So much for the Baal Shem's teachings. He died in 1760 in Miedzyboz, where his grave is—or was before the war—still to be seen. He left no writings and, so far as I know, there is no extant picture of him. What we know of him and his ideas is given in the writings of the older zaddikim. Rabbi Dov Baer, like his master, left nothing written.

The Baal Shem has been likened to a number of religious geniuses ranging from John Wesley to Jesus of Nazareth. One Jewish author enthusiastically acclaims Saint Francis of Assisi as a Christian Hasid! The Baal Shem was humble and unassuming, understanding, compassionate and loving. All persons, whatever their station

in life, whatever the nature of their problems, found in him strength and inspiration. He saw immediately into the heart of persons and situations. To any occasion he could produce a vivid and humorous story, a graphic parable. Although his message went far in deemphasizing learning, he was not as unlearned as some have thought—or as I perhaps have given the impression. No obscurantist, he admired erudition; but he protested against making it the end-all of religious life. His Hasidism was like a repast for the belly and palate of the spirit: it had substance and it had savor.

The Baal Shem was a holy man who loved ebullience and gaiety; a saint who was a fond husband and father; he even liked to smoke a pipe. Even more, he delighted to join the round of dancers and did not forbear to imbibe wine or stronger drink with his men. That was the mode of life of his people, that was the life he lived with them.

Now my story is ended. But I think that the best way to close is to let some of those master storytellers of olden time have their say.

The Baal Shem said: "I owe everything to the bath. To immerse oneself is better than to mortify the flesh. Mortifying the flesh weakens the strength you need for devotions and teaching, the bath of immersion heightens this strength."

* * *

One Simhat Torah evening, the Baal Shem himself danced together with his congregation. He took the scroll of the Torah in his hand and danced with it. Then he laid the scroll aside and danced without it. At this moment, one of his disciples who was intimately acquainted with his gestures, said to his companions: "Now our master

has laid aside the visible, dimensional teachings, and has taken the spiritual teachings unto himself."

* * *

Once when Rabbi Yitzhak of Vorki was playing host to certain prominent men of Israel, they discussed the value to a household of an honest and efficient servant. They said that a good servant made for good management and cited Joseph at whose hands everything prospered. Rabbi Yitzhak objected. "I once thought that too," he said. "But then my teacher showed me that everything depends on the master of the house. You see, in my youth my wife gave me a great deal of trouble, and though I myself put up with her as best I could, I was sorry for the servants. So I went to my teacher, Rabbi David of Lelov, and asked him whether I should oppose my wife. All he said was: 'Why do you speak to me? Speak to yourself!' I thought over these words for quite a while before I understood them. But I did understand them when I recalled a certain saying of the Baal Shem: 'There is thought, speech and action. Thought corresponds to one's wife, speech to one's children, and action to one's servants Whoever straightens himself out in regard to all three will find that everything prospers at his hands.' Then I understood what my teacher had meant: everything depended on myself."

The Baal Shem said this to a zaddik who used to preach admonishing sermons: "What do you know about admonishing? You yourself have remained unacquainted with sin all the days of your life, and you have had nothing to do with the people around you—how should you know what sinning is?"

* * *

Said the maggid (Dov Baer) to Rabbi Zusya, his

disciple: "I cannot teach you the ten principles of service. But a little child and a thief can show you what they are.

"From the child you can learn three things: he is merry for no particular reason; never for a moment is he idle; when he needs something, he demands it vigorously.

"The thief can instruct you in seven things: he does his service by night; if he does not finish what he has set out to do, in one night, he devotes the next night to it; he and those who work with him, love one another; he risks his life for slight gains; what he takes has so little value for him, that he gives it up for a very small win; he endures blows and hardship, and it matters nothing to him; he likes his trade and would not exchange it for any other."

* * *

Rabbi Mendel once boasted to his teacher Rabbi Elimeleketh that evenings he saw the angel who rolls away the light before the darkness, and mornings the angel who rolls away the darkness before the light. "Yes," said Rabbi Elimeleketh, "in my youth I saw that too. Later on you don't see those things any more."

* * *

The rabbi of Sasov once gave the last money he had in his pocket to a man of ill repute. His disciples threw it up to him. He answered them: "Shall I be more finicky than God who gave it to me?"

* * *

A respected woman once came to ask the advice of the rabbi of Apt. The instant he set eyes on her he shouted: "Adultress! You sinned only a short while ago, and yet now you have the insolence to step into this pure house!" Then from the depths of her heart the woman replied: "The Lord of the world has patience with the wicked. He

is in no hurry to make them pay their debts and He does not disclose their secret to any creature, lest they be ashamed to turn to Him. Nor does He hide His face from them. But the rabbi of Apt sits there in his chair and cannot resist revealing at once what the Creator has covered." From that time on the rabbi of Apt used to say: "No one ever got the better of me except once—and then it was a woman!"

FROM A DISCIPLE'S NOTEBOOK

(Continued from the Summer Issue)

The summer of 1926 flowed on—one calm and lovely day following another. With nothing but acres of sage, wild buckwheat, yucca and greasewood surrounding the green oasis of the Ashrama on the front and sides, while the mountains arose in the rear, no hint of a noisy world, no sound of men or motors broke in rudely on the meditations of the Summer School. Each day came and went, wearing, as it were, a garland of the Swami's thoughts and words as they marked the morning, noon and afternoon sessions.

Thus at midday on August 11th, 1926, the Swami, gathering his brood around him, turned once more to the teachings of Lord Buddha. After intoning the usual Sanskrit chant, in order to tune his human orchestra and lift their thoughts above and beyond the world of appearances, he opened the scripture.

(Swami reads from the *Dhammapada*)

He who never identifies himself with name and form, and does not grieve over that which is past, he is indeed a Bhikkhu.

Swami: All our troubles and afflictions arise from our

identifying ourselves with name and form. Name and form continually change, and whatever bears name and form changes also. Those who try to find the abiding, the changeless, through changing things are bound to meet with disappointment. It is attachment to these things that holds one back. Attachment is not love. Love gives freedom. Attachment is born of man's selfish instinct. Love is born of That which is beyond name and form, the everlasting spiritual entity who dwells as a witness within man's inner being.

Life in form, for its betterment, must go through the process of transformation. This means that certain things will fall away from us. We call this process "death." We cling to death, to that whose usefulness is over, and forget to cling to life. Therein lies our tragedy. But the Spirit within does not cling to the passing and changing. It does not cling to anything.

Tranquillity is the mark of the spiritual consciousness. We do not have to strive for it; it comes. It comes quite naturally when the thought is still, and fixed at a high point. Certain thoughts always bring a sense of quietude over the mind, a feeling of awe and reverence. There may be times when evil thoughts may try to possess us. At those times we should strive to reorganize our mind and direct it toward the Ideal.

Let us know in our hearts that there is One who is ever pure, ever free, and effulgent. No ignorance, no darkness can approach that One, for light always dispels darkness. No darkness can overcome us when we seek refuge in that great abiding shelter.

You all know the relation of a tree with its root. A tree apart from its root has no stability. Its flowers and fruits may attract, but its root is the source of its flowers

and fruits. Its root is its being. Now that Eternal Spirit is our root. Is it not a beautiful concept that God is the root of our life, that we spring from that Infinite One? We may often have cause for distress, we may often allow ourselves to be troubled and distracted, yet through all these trials and tribulations we shall survive if we remain rooted in Him. Should we, however, be severed from our root, not only would our body fade, but our mind would also wither away.

It may at first require a tremendous amount of imagination to go back in consciousness to our root; but do we not use our imagination constantly in relation to other things? Therefore, if in order to establish our connection with the Source of life itself, we have to extend our minds, even through the channel of imagination, we should not hesitate. Such an effort would be blessed.

Truth, however, is not a matter of imagination. Truth is self-effulgent, self-existent. If once we bring ourselves in contact with It, our life becomes quickened, our faith awakened. Then no longer can we fall back from It altogether or lose sight of It.

"Giving up all egotistic efforts, come unto Me—come unto Me alone," the Lord Sri Krishna says. "I shall save thee from all distress, all sin and sorrow and affliction. Grieve not!" If we can only believe in this and surrender ourselves with ardor to Him, the Eternal One, we shall have no lack.

(Swami continues reading)

Let a man forsake anger. Let him forsake pride. Let him overcome all bondage. No sufferings overtake a man who has forsaken all pride and calls nothing his own.

A person can have great possessions and yet not be a bondslave to them. It isn't a question of how much or

how little we have. Bondage is a state of mind, and so also is freedom.

(Swami reads)

Let a man overcome hatred by love.

We are able to do good only when our hearts are actuated by love. It is well to see how the great Teachers applied these things in their lives. Christ said that if a man comes and asks you for your cloak, you should give him your coat also.

There was in India a holy man by the name of Pavhari Baba. This saint lived in a small cave and had practically no possessions save a few cooking pots. One day a thief stole these, but he dropped them when he saw Pavhari Baba approaching. Pavhari Baba who had seen all this, picked up the bundle of stolen goods and ran after the thief in order to give it back to him, calling upon him all the time to stop. The thief, believing he was being pursued in order that he might be punished, ran faster than ever; but finally Pavhari Baba caught up with him, and thrusting the bundle into his hands said, "Here, take these. They are yours. I give them to you. Your need seems to be greater than mine!"

In the light of worldly wisdom we might think that this was a most foolish thing to do. But in the spiritual kingdom the order of things is reversed. If a man wants something so much that he will even resort to stealing, the instinct of the holy person is to give him a full dose of what he desires. This does not mean that the robber who stole the pots, lost them and then had them given back to him, became more fixed in his dishonest habits. No one can rob a saintly person or take advantage of him and not be quickened. Thus the man who robbed Pavhari Baba was fundamentally changed by that ex-

perience and turned to a more constructive way of living. There are not a few such instances in connection with the lives of illumined personages. So we see that Christ's command has a profound significance.

We lack the vision and the courage and say, "Such action is not practical." But when true understanding comes to us and we gain the courage, we find that it is not only practical, it is transforming. There are certain beautiful principles of life, and when we begin to put them into practice, we cannot stop till we have done this in full measure. "He who has once tasted nectar cannot relish molasses." Once we have made actual contact with that Being of all beings, that Source of all happiness, we cannot be satisfied with anything less. We acquire a thirst for the Divine.

People who have accustomed hours to eat and to sleep, feel hungry or sleepy when those hours come around. Same way it is with the soul of man. There are those who have their accustomed hours for inner communion, and when those hours arrive they feel hungry for that union. They feel that it is better to go without food or drink or sleep than to fail to make that inner contact. In this way they become victorious. It is the mark of the masterful mind.

Strength, strength is what we need, and strength we can always have if we learn to draw from the Source. The only thing that is required on our part is understanding and willingness, also perhaps a little bit of art. The greatest art comes as the result of one-pointedness. When all our thoughts and all our feelings are made single, like a searchlight, we penetrate through everything; we gain a sense of proportion, of values, and produce only that which is harmonious and true.

Thursday, August 12th, 4:00 P.M.

(Swami gives Invocation)

May the Supreme Being bless us,
May He be pleased with us.
May we acquire strength and illumination
through our study.
May all our thoughts, words and actions
Be dedicated to that One from whom we have
descended.

Swami: When I give this invocation with which the Indo-Aryans have always opened their studies, it makes me think of the way musicians tune up their instruments in an orchestra. This chant is a tuning up.

May we enjoy blessings together;
May our study be fruitful;
May it bring us realization;
May there be no doubt or envy among us.

Doubt is a very destructive element. Just one broken chord disturbs the harmony of the whole.

(Swami reads from the *Bhagavad Gita*)

O Parantapa (Arjuna), wisdom-sacrifice is far superior to the sacrifice performed with material objects. The entire realm of action, O Partha, ends in wisdom. Learn this by reverence, by enquiry and by humble service.

Humility is taught unanimously by all the World Teachers. In the Orient when a devotee comes across a holy person, he not only expresses his reverence in words, he prostrates his whole body at the feet of that one to whom he is offering his homage. What it really means is: I lay my whole being down before the Ideal. It is an attitude of complete surrender.

(Swami continues reading)

Those men of wisdom who have realized the Truth, will teach thee Supreme wisdom.

Swami: We can always ask questions of those who know. There are many teachers, but the real Teacher, the World Teacher is only One. Blessed are those who have a teacher through whom the voice of the One speaks. Whatever words flow through his lips, they are but the one Word. Sometimes a seeker goes to a teacher, carrying a harsh, defiant spirit. Then it is an effort for the teacher to speak to him. Another comes with yearning to know, and there is a tremendous outpouring.

Sincerity, humility and the spirit of service — these three must be dominant in the nature of a genuine devotee. Sincerity destroys all delusion. Without it there can be no approach to Truth, no access to the One. Humility is a basic factor in the spiritual life, and real religion begins with the religion of service. Serve, serve, serve! It doesn't make any difference who it is that you serve. There should be no distinction between the worthy and the unworthy.

Through service we can win everything. From God to man, all becomes our friend through service. By means of it we make our humility lasting.

(Swami continues reading)

Knowing which, O Pandava, thou shalt not again thus fall into error, and by which thou shalt see all beings in (thy) Self and also in Me.

Who is there who would not like to attain that state of consciousness from which there is no falling back into ignorance? It can be attained, but only in one way — through absolute surrender to our higher part. There is no "if", no doubt, nothing vague in that consciousness. For the divinely illumined mystic there is no uncertainty. He sees and he knows. Realization means that, not seeing through others' eyes but by direct perception. The

really Great Teachers behold Truth in that way. During our days of ignorance when we lack vision, our faith in those Great Ones saves us from being agnostic. It is through childlike faith that we get our start on the spiritual path. If a man is on the edge of a precipice and a saving hand is held out to him, does he argue and ask whose hand it is and why this help is being given to him, and then because of the delay, fall down into the abyss? You know he does not. So it is with childlike faith. It can be a saving grace. Faith, fervent faith can take us over many rough places in life.

(Swami continues reading)

Even if thou art the most sinful of the sinful, thou shalt cross over (the ocean of) sin by the bark of wisdom.

Here is a very definite statement. You see, spiritual Teachers, the Great Ones, do not have any room in their hearts for doubt. Yet even these Great Ones have to go to a Teacher in order to be shown ways and means. It is according to the order of things, and has to do with the process of initiation—one brother leading another, as it were. Of course, whoever has burning zeal and receptivity quickly grasps the essence of things. This openness to receive spiritual truth always implies humility—humility uniting the teacher and the taught.

(Swami continues reading)

As a blazing fire reduces all fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the wisdom fire reduce all actions to ashes.

Swami: It isn't a question of just an imaginary fire. The fire of wisdom is real, but we have to kindle it and keep it ever burning. It does burn all impurities to ashes. That is the reason why some of the devotees take fire as a symbol. Outer fire suggests the fire that burns within.

For instance, outer cleanliness does far more than just cleanse the body. It suggests that our inner being must also be kept clean. All these ideas are to increase our feelings of delicacy and sanctity. We cannot increase such feelings too much.

One thing the scriptures make clear. There is no need for fear. The Master Spirits are constantly giving us this thought. If we kindle the fire within us and if we go with humility unto Him, the Guru, the Lord, He will save us from all affliction. That is the Divine promise.

As long as we are humble, we are safe. That is why prosperity and success are sometimes detrimental. They can unbalance a person.

Lord Gouranga, India's Christ-like saint, gave three rules essential to the life of the Spirit.

One should be lowly as a blade of grass.

One should have endurance like a tree. A woodman may cut off its branches, but it continues to give shade.

One should give honor to others with no seeking of honor for one's self. He who observes these rules, who follows this way, his prayers will be answered.

That thought of giving honor to others—how it lifts the consciousness above the small things of life! Do not push yourself forward and you will never be left behind. Do not try to force yourself up and you will never be brought low.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

To think ourselves imperfect, and others perfect—that is happiness. That creatures should recognize we are without virtue takes nothing from us, makes us no poorer; it is they who by this lose interior joy; for nothing is sweeter than to think well of our neighbor.

—*St. Therese of Lisieux*

A MILESTONE

By Nathan

A traveler, when he sees a milestone on the road, is elated beyond measure because he knows he has taken the right track. He will not abruptly stop his journey at this juncture though he may spread his canvas there for a day or two. After the rest he inevitably sets off again towards his destination.

We are all pilgrims who have taken the road to the eternal abode of our Father. Only a few have seen a milestone, and the rest have not seen any signs. There is a tendency for those who have seen the milestone to grow smug, to fix their camp permanently and loiter, forgetting that there are more valuable things than silver and gold to be had if they only progress. Most of us allow self-satisfaction, not arising from perfection but from idleness, to get the better of us, and it hampers our advance in spiritual life.

A woodcutter who earned his livelihood by cutting wood in a jungle nearby had to work hard; for he was satisfied with the wood that he hewed on the fringe of the jungle. One day he met a monk who advised him to go farther and farther into the jungle, hinting that he would thereby become rich. Taking the advice of the good man, the woodcutter ventured forth and struck sandalwood, gold and diamonds.

The man who said to Jesus that he had kept all the commandments from his youth was tarrying at the milestone of self-righteousness. And what did Jesus the Christ tell him? He said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come and follow me."

Though the man had kept to the law for a number of years, he was to Jesus Christ only a traveler on the way. When the man was asked to renounce his possessions and follow Him, he could not do so and was sad. He was put in the crucible and failed. He himself barred his progress to the kingdom of God.

In these days when there is a widespread belief that God's sweet grace can be had without renunciation, the Lord's words are a pointer. If there is no outward renunciation, there ought to be at least inward renunciation. The test of inward renunciation is in our ability not to feel sorrowful when we have to part from our possessions and dear ones. A Socratic equanimity should pervade our being when precious things of this world pass away from us.

The Lord did not stop with renunciation. He further wanted the man to follow him. Imitation of Jesus the Christ shall, of course, take us to the kingdom of God.

St. Paul voiced what the Lord said as follows: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under the schoolmaster." Morality and goodness become natural to us, once we have obtained such faith. St. Paul does not want us to stop at the milestone where only law is kept. He urges us to go forward and obtain faith in Jesus. The faith must be such as will transform our whole nature, obliterate our sense of ego and make us one with the Christ. We must find ourselves peaceful and blissful. It must be like the calmness that comes at daybreak or sunset, and it must be as sweet as honey.

In the *Bhagavad Gita,* the translation of which is available to the West, Lord Krishna persuades Arjuna,

the prince, who was unwilling to engage himself in a righteous war with his cousins, to take up arms against them to destroy unrighteousness. It was Arjuna's sense of ego which was making him think that it was better to retire to the forest than fight a bloody battle against his cousins and relatives. Lord Krishna exhorted the prince to do the Father's will; this he said, is the goal of our journey.

We may erroneously imagine that we are doing the will of the Father when, in fact, we may not be. What is the test? The purity of one's heart will tell. The pure one shall see God and do His will.

Buddha set aside all orthodoxy to know the Truth. Having reached Nirvana, he preached that we should be good for goodness' sake, and did not extol the practising of goodness with any expectation of reward. He did not stop with mere doing good.

There is Mrs. Bargery who is kind to her neighbor so that she may some day receive a similar act in return. When the neighbor becomes a blackguard and returns evil for good, the reaction in Mrs. Bargery's mind is one of sorrow. But depression and sorrow cannot be the outcome of goodness. To conquer misery one has to pass from doing good for something to doing good for pure love.

In the life of Buddha, we find a man ready to slaughter a kid as an offering to one of the gods to reach heaven. Buddha kneeled down at the spot, stretched out his neck and said that if he could get to heaven killing that kid, he would even fare better by killing him. Such was the sacrifice and the extent of the goodness that Buddha set before us. Those who dillydally with morality shall never reach that height. Buddha's was goodness that flowed from God-mind naturally and easily.

A WAY OF LIFE

By Sir William Osler

I have a message that may be helpful. It is not philosophical, nor is it strictly moral or religious . . . and yet in a way it is all three. It is so simple that some of you may turn away disappointed. My message is but a word, a *Way*.

The way of life that I preach is a habit to be acquired gradually by long and steady repetition. It is the practice of living for the day only, and for the day's work, living in "day-tight compartments." . . . The chief worries of life arise from the foolish habit of looking before and after.

A few months ago I stood on the bridge of a great liner, plowing the ocean at twenty-five knots. "She is alive in every plate," said the captain, "a huge monster with brain and nerves, an immense stomach, a wonderful heart and lungs, and a splendid system of locomotion." Just at that moment a signal sounded, and all over the ship the water-tight compartments were closed. "Our chief factor of safety," said the captain.

Now each one of you is a much more marvelous organization than the great liner, and bound on a longer voyage. What I urge is that you so learn to control the machinery as to live with "day-tight compartments" as the most certain way to insure safety on the voyage. Get on the bridge, and see that at least the great bulkheads are in working order. Touch a button and hear, at every level of your life the iron doors shutting out the Past—the dead yesterdays. Touch another, and shut off, with a metal curtain, the Future—the unborn tomorrows. Then you are safe, safe for today.

The load of tomorrow, added to that of yesterday,

carried today makes the strongest falter. . . . Waste of energy, mental distress, nervous worries dog the steps of a man who is anxious about the future. Shut close, then, the great fore and aft bulkheads, and prepare to cultivate the habit of a life in "day-tight compartments!"

REPORT

ANANDA ASHRAMA, COHASSET AND BOSTON, MASS.

Summer passes in a quiet rhythm at the Vedanta Centre except for a frequent influx of life evident especially on festive days. The most familiar scene within the forest walls of this Ashrama is the arrival and departure of friends, Vedanta students, visitors and guests who attend the regular program of daily worship and study or the public Services. Up to date, the eleven o'clock Service on Sunday has been held each time out-of-doors in the Nature's Sanctuary, so considerate have been the controllers of the weather! The four o'clock Service is also a part of the activities, as is the dinner which is served to a goodly number of people, either under the big pine or in the wistaria arbor or on the lawn each Sunday.

Every Thursday evening the weekly trip to Boston is made for the class on the *Bhagavad Gita,* which brings the faithful group together at 70 Charles Street. Beginning in September the Vedanta Centre will have its new chapel and library at 202 Commonwealth Avenue. The tentative plan is to have Candlelight dedication ceremonies on September ninth, after which at least two Services will be conducted there regularly each week.

The special observances commemorating the final liberation of Swami Paramananda and Swami Vivekananda, as well as Holy Mother's Birthday Centenary and the

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the establishment of Ananda Ashrama in Cohasset all were held on Sundays: June 21st, July 4th, July 18th and August 15th respectively. On each of these occasions there has been a marked increase in attendance and a Hindu meal has been served. Various members of the congregation — namely: Mrs. Marguerite Breck, Nora Shaw, Lois Houghton, Raphael Boruchoff, all of whom have been long connected with Vedanta—shared the honor with Gayatri Devi at the afternoon Services in tributes to Swami Paramananda and Holy Mother. At the Anniversary Celebration Reverend Henry Cooper of the First Parish Unitarian Church in Scituate gave a fine address on religion for one world entitled *The Influence of the East on the West.*

VISIT TO STAR ISLAND, NEW HAMPSHIRE

A little island among the group known as the Isles of Shoals stirs with life each Summer as various religious bodies come together to hold their conventions. During the week of July 18th the Northeast Alliance, representing Unitarian and other Liberal Christian women, met for their conference. Srimati Gayatri Devi was their guest speaker on Tuesday evening the 20th when she gave an address on *When West Meets East.* Such enthusiasm was aroused that by unanimous request a Sunrise Service was spontaneously planned for the following morning. At 5:00 A.M., as the sun rose from the edge of the water, Sanskrit chants of India were intoned and English songs and prayers invoking the One Spirit while the assembled worshippers stood in silence. This very impressive service seemed to be the living demonstration of the previous evening's topic.

The recent hurricanes in New England have caused some damage and great loss of trees in the Cohasset retreat! Details in next issue.

Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California

Through the years, Ananda Ashrama has been the scene of many unique and inspiring activities drawing together many people of divergent types. The night of June 3rd proved to be such an occasion. On that evening Nippo Strongheart, a chief of America's Yakima Indians, assisted by David Villasenor, performed once again the sacred fire ceremony of the plains people. Earlier in the day David Villasenor had made the beautiful sand painting around which the ritual takes place. Both Chief Strongheart and David Villasenor come to the Ashrama with deep devotion having found no other place where they felt they could enact this holy Indian ceremony. Along with the sincere prayers of the nearly three hundred people who had gathered in the Temple patio, the smoke rose to the Great Spirit as an offering and a supplication for world peace. After the wood had mysteriously burst into flame, the Chief spoke of the importance of fire to the Indian people and also of the still great need of understanding between the Indians and the white man. It was truly a gratifying experience for all and has resulted in many new friends for the Ashrama.

Summer began as always with the Memorial day of Swami Paramananda, Ashrama's beloved founder. The observance began privately on Saturday and closed with a vigil on Monday. Sunday, the 21st, the actual day of the Swami's passing, the public Services were held in his loving memory and Sister Daya spoke glowingly of his luminous life and teachings.

On the 4th of July the final liberation of the great Swami Vivekananda was commemorated. The Reverend

Andrew Long of Staten Island was present for the day, and in addition to Sister Daya's vivid talks on *The Ever Free* and *As They Knew Him,* Mr. Long spoke at each Service in his vitalizing manner on the subject of *Freedom, the keynote of the day.* Monday afternoon was devoted to meditation and reading from the great Swami's writings and life.

On Sunday, July 18th, another day of passing was observed, that of the Holy Mother. The centenary of her birth, the observance of which extends from December, 1953 to December, 1954, was also celebrated on this day. At the morning Service Sister Daya spoke on *Great Lady of God,* creating a very living picture of this truly sanctified woman so little known to the people of the West. The afternoon sermon was on *Power through Surrender.*

On the night of Wednesday, August 11th, the first of the now annual Summer concerts took place. The soloist on this occasion was Miss Margaret Aue, cellist. Miss Aue is a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and is a very fine musician. She was ably accompanied by Ashrama's resident member, Rudolph Gruen, composer-pianist. Their program included works of Beethoven, Saint-Saens, Bloch, and others, along with a composition of Mr. Gruen's as well. The performance of both artists was brilliant and everyone present was filled with enthusiasm. The free-will offering was taken as a benefit for Charushila Devi's Ashrama-school in Calcutta.

On Friday night, September 10th, Mr. Rudolph Gruen, composer-pianist, gave his yearly recital at the Ashrama Community House, which evoked enthusiastic response from the many gathered to hear him.